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SUBJECT: CIVCOM: ITS PRIORITIES AND CHALLENGES

Classified By: USEU Poloff Lee Litzenberger for reasons 1.4 (B) and (D)

11. (C) Summary: A June 29 meeting between USEU officials and a group of counselors from the EU Committee for Civilian Aspects of Crisis Management (CIVCOM) clarified the role that the committee plays within the ESDP structure and the challenges it faces inside and outside the EU. A relatively new committee, CIVCOM, s major responsibility is to provide technical advice and other support on civilian crisis management operations to the Political and Security Committee (PSC). CIVCOM, s guidelines for future operations include a preference for missions that provide quality if not quantity, priority for regional conflicts with direct security implications for Europe, and emphasis on operations that either support regional organizations or have a definite and identifiable end date. End summary.

12. (C) On June 29, USEU officials met with counselors from the Committee for Civilian Aspects of Crisis Management (CIVCOM) to discuss the body, s role, priorities, and challenges. The six counselors represented Austria, Finland, France, Lithuania, Malta, and the UK. CIVCOM is a relatively new body, established by an EU Council decision in May 2000 within the general framework of strengthening the EU's Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) and in particular, the European Security and Defense Policy (ESDP). Its members are relatively lower-ranking diplomats, most of whom do not have a technical background in crisis response.

13. (C) CIVCOM reports to the EU's Committee of Permanent Representatives (COREPER), and its official responsibilities are to "provide information, formulate recommendations, and give advice on civilian aspects of crisis management" to the Political and Security Committee (PSC). The counselors described the committee as a civilian "mirror to the EUMC" (EU Military Committee), playing an "important but not leading role" as an advisory body for ESDP operations. Unlike the EUMC, however, CIVCOM does not have a group of professional support personnel, which is institutionalized on the military side in the form of the EU Military Staff (EUMS). Instead, CIVCOM calls upon and coordinates member states' civilian crisis management experts as situations dictate.

14. (C) As a bureaucratic body, CIVCOM sticks closely to its advising and coordinating roles, trying to identify available capabilities and relevant issues and objectives as well as define the appropriate structure of operations for the EU in general and for specific missions as they arise. The counselors stressed that it is political pressure from individual member states that serves as the driving force for bringing various crisis situations to the fore, and they mentioned as an example Portugal, s interest in a mission to Guinea-Bissau. An exception to this process has been the current study of a mission to Aceh, which the counselors say--with some frustration--was initiated via UNSR Ahtisaari, s close relationship with HiRep Solana. Other EU officials have expressed that they feel they are being "maneuvered into" a mission by Ahtisaari, who as facilitator of the Aceh peace talks had initially fostered the idea of sending first EU forces and then an EU monitoring team to oversee the negotiations. The option of peacekeeping forces was rejected by the Indonesian government, but the EU role in monitoring the ceasefire was accepted by both parties to the conflict. The Political and Security Committee (PSC) is expected to forward the proposal for an Aceh monitoring mission to CIVCOM on July 8 for technical advice on the structure of the mission and to begin to identify necessary personnel.

15. (C) The CIVCOM counselors provided some guidelines or priorities for current and future civilian operations. The first was seeking "quality over quantity," which they said explained the small size of some EU missions (between 10 and 25 people). The second was giving priority to regional conflicts with direct security implications for Europe (Georgia, Moldova, and the Balkans). The third was designing operations that supported regional organizations or at least had a definite end date and could be handed off to long-term development programs. As for future collaboration with the

US, the CIVCOM counselors appeared open to discussing how parts of the planned US-EU civilian crisis management cooperation agenda can be informally implemented. They welcomed the opportunity to have officers from the Office of the Coordinator for Reconstruction and Stabilization (S/CRS) present to CIVCOM how the US wants to proceed regarding the agenda. The UK Presidency urged a cautious, step-by-step approach to avoid reopening contentious issues over the respective roles of the EU and NATO in crisis response.

16. (C) The counselors acknowledged there exists competition between the Council and the Commission because the division of labor over crisis management has not yet been defined. One unequivocal Commission responsibility is its control of the CFSP budget, which funds civilian operations, but the CIVCOM counselors expressed concern that it is too small (approximately \$63 million euros annually) and admitted that there are only four million euros left for the rest of the year. The counselors also described the Commission's mechanisms, including the European Humanitarian Aid Office (ECHO), as better able to handle crisis prevention, and to run long-term development programs. They pointed out the difference in the mandates between ESDP crisis management operations and Commission funded programs, noting that ESDP might impose conditionality on an operation in an effort to improve governance while the Commission can provide aid on the basis of need without any conditions.

17. (C) Regarding the civilian-military (or civ-mil) cell that was recently declared operational, the CIVCOM counselors maintained that it will be evolving for a long time in both substance and infrastructure (so far there are only about four of the eventual 17 planners staffing it and some will be double-hatted as EU Military Staff personnel). It was described as more of an instrument rather than an independent actor, and the counselors said that operational planning would continue to be done by the Council Secretariat, External Relations Directorate for Civilian Crisis Management and Coordination (DG E IX) in the foreseeable future. As for funding civilian-military operations, counselors hinted that although the CFSP budget is reserved exclusively for the civilian aspects of such operations, there is "room for interpretation" regarding what assets are considered civilian and CFSP money may be able to fund some capabilities that would be used for civilian purposes in these operations but in other circumstances would be considered military.

McKinley

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